

Attorney Docket No.: C4325(C)
Serial No.: 10/574,610
Filed: April 4, 2006
Confirmation No.: 4215

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

The claims have been amended to eliminate the multiple dependencies in the dependent claims. Furthermore, claim 1 has been amended in accordance with the specification at page 7, lines 27-30 to make clearer that the particular usefulness of the invention is for heat-sensitive surfactants.

Claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mort, III et al. (US Patent No. US 6,258,773), hereinafter "Mort". Claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ramanan et al. (US Patent No. 6,288,016), hereinafter "Ramanan" in view of Mort.

Mort teaches that it is preferred according to Col 5 lines 6-12; to recycle 1-40% undersized detergent particles to the mixer. Mort does not appear to suggest to cool the recycle. The example has air at 125°C input to the fluid bed so it seems to be heated. This recycle teaching is not linked to a process for feeding surfactant acid precursor except via the example (where fines are about 14%) and via the general preference at col 5 line 41. One of ordinary skill in the art would have had to select recycle, select the amount to be greater than 30% (twice that exemplified) and select the surfactant acid embodiment before even beginning to think about reversing the heating shown in Mort to arrive at a cooled recycle.

Ramanan teaches that the fines are separated by elutriation from the fluid bed. No quantity is given and they are not recycled at all. The examiner asserts that cooling of fines occurs. This is not clear. The fines are blown out very soon after

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material is added to the fluid bed. Hot air is often used if water must be evaporated. The cooling effect comes from the evaporation not from the air used to fluidise. Since the fines are not kept in the fluid bed very long it is not necessarily the case that they get cooled down. Thus this document does not provide the missing motivation to cool the fines recycle in Mort. Furthermore since it is not concerned with recycle it is questionable if it can really be combined with Mort.

Example 7 is the one being used. It is similar to example 8 which does not have any dry neutralisation. The amounts of STPP in compositions I, J and K do not relate well to the amounts being added in example 7 so the disclosure in example 7 as a whole seems to be non enabling (reference to compositions 10 and 11 adds further confusion, presumably these are J and K).

Even more importantly, applicants' amended claims are particularly directed at heat-sensitive surfactants. Formation of these surfactants by dry neutralisation is not mentioned in Mort or Ramanan.

Applicants' invention takes the approach of reducing the heat exposure by reduction of temperature. This was only realised to be possible once the concept of running at artificially high levels of recycle was obtained.

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner's acknowledgement of documents previously submitted with an Information Disclosure Statement (copy enclosed for the Examiner's convenience).

In light of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully requested that the application be allowed to issue.

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If a telephone conversation would be of assistance in advancing the prosecution of the present application, applicants' undersigned attorney invites the Examiner to telephone at the number provided.

Respectfully submitted,


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